

**Personnel**

# **pRIde**

**Presented by  
The Rhode Island Division  
of Personnel Administration**

## **A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR DiPRETE**

The people of Rhode Island have asked for a government that stands behind them, not in their path.

They have asked that their government be returned to them by making it more responsive to their interests, more aware of their needs, more efficient in the conduct of their business, and a clearer reflection of their own integrity and excellence.

All of us, as state employees, share a commitment to the citizens of Rhode Island. We share a commitment to improve our services so that our public buildings will once again stand as a sign of our state's strength.

As Governor, I intend to lead the way in bringing to the people of Rhode Island services of which they can be proud. It is time for governmental services to solve problems — not create them.

If we work together, there is much that we can accomplish. Working together, however, requires both cooperation and communication.

This newsletter is the first in a series, which has been designed to foster better communication among state employees. Its

columns will bring you valuable information concerning state government.

I encourage all of you to take advantage of the "feedback" column. This feature is of particular importance because it provides you with a direct opportunity to express your ideas. For any communications effort to succeed, we must have participation from everyone involved.

The people of Rhode Island have asked that we not be confined by old practices or traditional methods in our approach to governing this state. Improving government services will require innovation, and your suggestions are of the utmost importance.

It is time for all of us, who know and care about state government, to work together to bring about the

changes that Rhode Island needs.

I sincerely hope that you will join me in a joint effort to make Rhode Island a better place in which to live and work.

Thank you very much for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,  
*Edward D. DiPrete*  
Edward D. DiPrete  
Governor



**Edward D. DiPrete  
Governor**



## In Your Best Interest . . .

The Conflict of Interest Law (Title 36, Chapter 14 of **Rhode Island General Laws**) provides standards of conduct and disclosure requirements for public officials. These elected or appointed officials must file an annual financial statement. This year's deadline for filing is FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 1985 for the calendar year 1984.

The law defines a state or municipal appointed official as a member of a state or municipal agency who is appointed for a term of office specified by the state constitution or a statute; or a charter or ordinance of any city or town. Also included are people who are appointed by or through the governing body or highest official of state or municipal government.

The Conflict of Interest Commission

administers the Conflict of Interest Law. Their location — Room 220, 10 Dorrance Street, Providence, 02903. For more information call 277-3790.

## Code of Ethics in Force

The 1984 Code of Ethics establishes standards of conduct that protect the well-being and rights of all state employees.

Personnel Administration will soon distribute, with the help of agency directors, a Code of Ethics brochure to each and every state employee. It's important reading material. Watch for it.

## Message Personnel

Twenty thousand strong! That's what we'd fill two football fields if we gathered all the state employees in Rhode Island and also the national employees. Our jobs vary from agency-to-agency, no matter what specific duties we perform. We're a very large "family." That makes it important for us to learn about the system we serve, to understand it. That's why we're publishing a newsletter with the wider view on state service. Communication, however, takes two — we don't listen, it's not communication. You tell us about yourself, your job and share your ideas on how to improve our state service family.

## BRANCHES

### Around our House . . .

The House of Representatives began the 1985 session by introducing a legislative package called *The Blue Print for Progress*. This package is the product of years of legislative experience. It represents an effort to decrease the property tax burden on all Rhode Islanders. The package has four major points, outlined below:

- (1) Expand state aid programs for both educational and noneducational purposes to reduce municipal reliance on property tax proceeds.
- (2) Reform the way state aid is distributed by ensuring that greater consideration is given to factors like municipal need, wealth, service responsibility and tax effort.
- (3) Promote property tax relief by building an incentive into expanded state aid programs that requires municipalities to cap property tax levy growth.
- (4) Assist cities and towns to improve efficiency that they may unnecessarily incur by improving technical assistance and training program.

The House of Representatives has also grappled with other tough issues — of rising costs for health care, adequate educational opportunities for our young people, compensation to victims of crime by the offender, combating the alarming trend of child abuse and lessening the state tax burden on Rhode Island taxpayers.

### In our Senate . . .

The General Assembly of Rhode Island convened this year welcoming 16 new senators. The new members bring a wealth of knowledge about governmental issues making it possible to begin immediate drafting of legislation. They also have experience — two served the Senate before, two are former state representatives, four served on city or town councils and one was a staff member of a state department.

Making up this year's Senate are 38 Democrats and 12 Republicans.

The Senate looks forward to another productive year. They look forward to an even greater amount of citizen participation in committee hearings.

### and in the Courts.

#### Gender Bias in the Courts

- A judge in Texas asked a female lawyer to turn around and face the courtroom. "Ladies and gentlemen, can you believe that this pretty little thing is an assistant attorney general?" asked the judge.
- A now-retired Los Angeles judge used to walk the marble courthouse hallways escorted by his attractive, uniformed woman sheriff. "She's my **bodyguard**," he enjoyed explaining with a leer.
- A Connecticut judge dismissed a charge against a man who failed in a rape attempt with the comment, "You can't blame someone for trying."

These are examples of "gender bias"

— gender-based stereotypes about the capabilities and proper roles of women.

The courts have been responsible for determining whether sex bias has been eliminated in other institutions. But very little attention has been paid to discrimination in the judicial system itself.

The process of self examination by the judiciary is just beginning with growing evidence that gender bias is perpetuated by the law itself and by the attitudes and values of some judges. Two eminent law professors thoroughly studied opinions on cases of sex discrimination against women and concluded, "... by and large, the performance of American judges in the area of sex discrimination can be succinctly described as ranging from poor to abominable."

Last fall, Rhode Island became the third state, following New Jersey and New York, in which the judiciary took the initiative to study the treatment women get in the court system. Supreme Court Chief Justice Joseph A. Bevilacqua named a Committee on Women in the Courts with Associate Justice Corrine P. Grande of the Superior Court to act as chairperson.

The committee will assess gender bias in the courts, document instances of discrimination and develop concrete proposals to eliminate the problem. Some of the areas under study include discriminatory behavior towards female attorneys, litigants,



# from the Administrator

number as a workforce.  
d together for a family photo. We're the largest  
t diverse.  
we all share a common purpose. Our work efforts,  
are united to serve the citizens of our state.  
even more important for us to unite our efforts, to  
and how we're working together.  
We want to keep you informed, to present you  
In this case, 20,000. We can tell you things, but if  
we'll be waiting to hear from you. Tell us about  
ow our communication program can strengthen

*Bradford E. Southworth*  
Bradford E. Southworth  
Personnel Administrator



## Cash for Your Bright Ideas

Look around you.

Do you see a way to improve something? If you do, your creative thinking could earn you a cash award in the Employee Suggestion Awards Program.

This program, administered by Personnel Administration, encourages you to investigate, to observe and to find out better ways to get the job done — faster, with less effort, with less material; by combining it with another task or simplifying it; maybe even eliminating it.

The question is, will your idea save money? If so, you'll get a share of that savings. To find out more about it, call 277-2178.

## Training

Personnel Administrations' training program offers free courses for state service employees to develop valuable skills.

Five courses are coming up. Two are still open for registration: Functions of State Government (1 credit) starts April 29 and 30, meets for eight three-hour sessions; and Improving State Employees' Public Image (½ credit) starts May 29 and 30 for five three-hour sessions. The instructor is Mr. Robert McCarthy.

Filled are: First Aid and C.P.R.; Leadership and Supervision; and Pre-retirement. These will be offered again in the future.

For information call 272-2178.

witnesses and jurors; the effect of sexual stereotypes and biases in statutes, court opinions, judicial decision-making and jury verdicts; and gender bias in the wording of forms and in court correspondence.

Within one year, the committee will complete its study and prepare a final report.

The twenty-two member committee

### Acknowledgements

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Governor

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Includes judges, lawyers and court personnel. They will use opinion-sampling techniques, hold public hearings and accept **unsigned** written statements describing personal experiences of discrimination.

New Jersey first completed a study on how women are treated in the courts and found them disadvantaged in almost every area.

If Rhode Island findings mirror New Jersey's, Rhode Island too will initiate seminars for judges, propose new laws and overhaul court administration.

For more information call Susan McCalmont, 277-3382.

## Your Turn!

We've given you some news and views. Now here's a chance to tell us what you'd like to see more of in **PRIDE**. Also, tell us what you didn't see that you would like to see.

Rate your interest in the following categories by giving each topic a number — 1 meaning high interest; 2, moderate; and 3, low.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and leisure topics               | <input type="checkbox"/> Health and safety               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Image/morale-building                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Office automation & innovation  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Departmental news                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer advocacy               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on individuals in state service | <input type="checkbox"/> The Judiciary — what's going on |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Legislature — what's going on     | <input type="checkbox"/> Special interest groups — list: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courtesy and protocol at work         |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self improvement                      |  |

Other — specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?** Use a separate sheet of paper and attach to this form. Send to: J. Hudson, Personnel Administration, 289 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908. (No postage necessary if sent through inter-departmental mail.)  
**OPTIONAL:** (required only if you want a response.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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